

IN THE CLAIMS

1.-6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

locating a dermal area of said patient ~~approximating a meridian~~;
a user statically contacting, with a probe, said dermal area and allowing said probe to dynamically vary a pressure applied by said probe to said dermal area, said probe comprising:

a stationary element to stabilize said probe against said dermal area;
a probe tip operably connected to a biasing element to apply said pressure to said dermal area;

a detector operably connected to said probe tip to detect an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said pressure;

a feedback loop connected to said detector to provide a feedback signal containing information with respect to said electrical signal at the patient's skin;
said biasing element connected to said feedback loop to receive said feedback signal and operating to dynamically adjust said pressure in accordance with said feedback signal; and

obtaining, from said probe, an electrical signal at the patient's skin ~~corresponding to said meridian~~.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said locating a dermal area further comprises providing a point locator for indicating a dermal location having a substantially greater bioelectric conductance value than a surrounding dermal area, said point locator configured to produce audible signals indicating said location.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said probe further comprises:

a conductive base; and

an abrasive bristly matrix coupled to a surface area of said conductive base, wherein a plurality of bristles of said abrasive bristly matrix simultaneously contact said dermal area.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, wherein said information comprises a bioelectric conductance value.

11. (currently amended) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

measuring relative conductance of a dermal area of said patient ~~proximate-a-meridian~~;
a user statically contacting with a probe the skin and allowing said probe to dynamically vary a pressure applied by said probe to the skin, said probe comprising:
a stationary element to stabilize said probe against said location;
a probe tip operably connected to a biasing element to apply a pressure to said location;

a detector operably connected to said probe tip to detect an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said pressure;

a feedback loop connected to said detector to provide a feedback signal containing information with respect to said electrical signal at the patient's skin; and

said biasing element connected to said feedback loop to receive said feedback signal and operating to dynamically adjust said pressure in accordance with said feedback signal; and

obtaining, from said probe, an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said meridian.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said measuring relative conductance of a dermal area further comprises:

iteratively measuring a bioelectric conductance value of a surface of said dermal area;

iteratively comparing a first said bioelectric conductance value corresponding to a first surface location to a second said bioelectric conductance value corresponding to a second surface location;

audibly indicating a dermal location where said second bioelectric conductance value is substantially greater than said first bioelectric conductance value.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said probe further comprises:

a conductive base; and

an abrasive bristly matrix coupled to a surface area of said conductive base, wherein a plurality of bristles of said abrasive bristly matrix simultaneously contact said dermal area.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said information comprises a bioelectric conductance value corresponding to said pressure.

15.-16. (canceled)

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 7, further comprising locating said meridian dermal area, wherein said dermal area is a first dermal area by:

locating successive dermal areas approximating said meridian first dermal area;
said user statically contacting said successive dermal areas with said probe;
allowing said probe to dynamically vary a pressure applied by said probe to said successive dermal areas in accordance with said feedback signal; and
determining a dermal location corresponding to said meridian first dermal area before
obtaining said electrical signal corresponding to said meridian first dermal area.

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 11, further comprising locating said meridian dermal area, wherein said dermal area is a first dermal area by:

said user statically contacting successive dermal areas proximate said meridian first dermal area with said probe;

allowing said probe to dynamically vary a pressure applied by said probe to said successive dermal areas in accordance with said feedback signal; and determining a dermal location corresponding to said meridian-first dermal area before obtaining said electrical signal corresponding to said meridian first dermal area.

19. (new) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

locating a first dermal area of said patient exhibiting higher conductivity than adjacent dermal areas;

a user statically contacting, with a probe, said dermal area and allowing said probe to dynamically vary a pressure applied by said probe to said dermal area, said probe comprising:

a stationary element to stabilize said probe against said dermal area;

a probe tip operably connected to a biasing element to apply said pressure to said dermal area;

a detector operably connected to said probe tip to detect an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said pressure;

a feedback loop connected to said detector to provide a feedback signal containing information with respect to said electrical signal at the patient's skin;

said biasing element connected to said feedback loop to receive said feedback signal and operating to dynamically adjust said pressure in accordance with said feedback signal; and

obtaining, from said probe, an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said first dermal area.

20. (new) The method of claim 19, wherein said locating a first dermal area further comprises providing a point locator for indicating a dermal location having a substantially

greater bioelectric conductance value than a surrounding dermal area, said point locator configured to produce audible signals indicating said location.

21. (new) The method of claim 19, wherein said probe further comprises:
 - a conductive base; and
 - an abrasive bristly matrix coupled to a surface area of said conductive base, whercin a plurality of bristles of said abrasive bristly matrix simultaneously contact said dermal area.
22. (new) The method of claim 19, wherein said information comprises a bioelectric conductance value.
23. (new) The method of claim 19, further comprising locating said first dermal area by:
 - locating successive dermal areas approximating said first dermal area;
 - said user statically contacting said successive dermal areas with said probe;
 - allowing said probe to dynamically vary a pressure applied by said probe to said successive dermal areas in accordance with said feedback signal; and
 - determining a dermal location corresponding to said first dermal area before obtaining said electrical signal corresponding to said first dermal area.

24. (new) A method for obtaining an electrical signal from a patient at the patient's skin, said method comprising:

measuring relative conductance of a first dermal area of said patient exhibiting higher

conductivity than adjacent dermal areas;

a user statically contacting with a probe the skin and allowing said probe to dynamically

vary a pressure applied by said probe to the skin, said probe comprising:

a stationary element to stabilize said probe against said location;

a probe tip operably connected to a biasing element to apply a pressure to said

location;

a detector operably connected to said probe tip to detect an electrical signal at the

patient's skin corresponding to said pressure;

a feedback loop connected to said detector to provide a feedback signal containing

information with respect to said electrical signal at the patient's skin; and

said biasing element connected to said feedback loop to receive said feedback

signal and operating to dynamically adjust said pressure in accordance

with said feedback signal; and

obtaining, from said probe, an electrical signal at the patient's skin corresponding to said

meridian.

25. (new) The method of claim 24, wherein said measuring relative conductance of a first dermal area further comprises:

iteratively measuring a bioelectric conductance value of a surface of said first dermal

area;

iteratively comparing a first said bioelectric conductance value corresponding to a first surface location to a second said bioelectric conductance value corresponding to a second surface location;
audibly indicating a dermal location where said second bioelectric conductance value is substantially greater than said first bioelectric conductance value.

26. (new) The method of claim 24, wherein said probe further comprises:
a conductive base; and
an abrasive bristly matrix coupled to a surface area of said conductive base, wherein a plurality of bristles of said abrasive bristly matrix simultaneously contact said first dermal area.
27. (new) The method of claim 24, wherein said information comprises a bioelectric conductance value corresponding to said pressure.
28. (new) The method of claim 24, further comprising locating said first dermal area by:
said user statically contacting successive dermal areas proximate said first dermal area with said probe;
allowing said probe to dynamically vary a pressure applied by said probe to said successive dermal areas in accordance with said feedback signal; and
determining a dermal location corresponding to said first dermal area before obtaining said electrical signal corresponding to said first dermal area.